

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01140 282021Z

62

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 IO-10 ISO-00 OPIC-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 STR-01 SAJ-01 /091 W

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P R 281830Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1904

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, PO

SUBJ: MELO ANTUNES TV INTERVIEW ON ECONOMIC PROGRAM

REFS: (A) LISBON 981 (NOTAL)

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PAGE 02 LISBON 01140 282021Z

(B) LISBON 1069

SUMMARY: MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO MELO ANTUNES IN TV INTERVIEW EXCLUDED "SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC" WAY, AND EMPHASIZED ROLE OF AFM IN ELABORATION OF PROGRAM. HE DISCUSSED NEED FOR FORMULA FOR WORKER INTERVENTION IN COMPANIES, AND SAID COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE WILL COME THROUGH AUTONOMY FROM SUPERPOWERS. HE ALSO UNDERLINED NEED FOR SACRIFICES AND CONTINUATION OF FREEDOM AND PLURALISM. END SUMMARY.

1. IN FEB 27 TV INTERVIEW, MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO MAJOR MELO ANTUNES RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS ABOUT JUST-RELEASED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAM (REFTEL A). IN HIS ROLE AS GENERAL COORDINATOR OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, ANTUNES DIRECTED TASK FORCE WHICH PREPARED PROGRAM. HIS RESPONSES IN INTERVIEW AMPLIFIED VIEWS EXPRESSED PREVIOUSLY IN PRESS CONFERENCE (REFTEL B). MAIN POINTS:

A. "WAY TOWARD SOCIALISM": ANTUNES EMPHASIZED THAT "SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC" WAY HAS BEEN EXCLUDED IN PLANNED TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY TOWARD ONE THAT "WE CONSIDER MAY COME TO BE SOCIALIST." QUALIFIED NATURE OF THIS STATEMENT SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTED BY ASSERTION THAT "AUTHENTIC FREEDOM ONLY WILL BE REACHED IN SOCIALISM." SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AT LEAST IN PART EXCLUDED BECAUSE OF COUNTRY'S PORJECTED ROLE AS LINK WITH THIRD WORLD.

B. ROLE OF AFM: HE EMPHASIZED THAT ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT (AFM) CANNOT WORK OUT PROGRAM IN DETAIL BY SELF, BUT THAT IT WILL "BENEFIT" FROM DEBATE WITH POLITICAL FORCES, "ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE LEFT."

C. ROLE OF WORKERS: IN RATHER VAGUE AND CONVOLUTED STATEMENT THAT APPEARS TO WARN AGAINST RECKLESS "SANEAMENTOS", ANTUNES SAID THAT "CLASS STRUGGLE" HAS TO BE SUBORDINATED TO NEED FOR LEAVING PRODUCTIVE APPARATUS IN HANDS OF "THOSE REALLY CAPABLE OF GIVING MEANING" TO TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY. AT SAME TIME, NEW FORMULAS ARE BEEDED FOR INTERVENTION OF WORKERS IN LIFE OF COMPANIES, WITHOUT "MECHANICAL IMPORTATION" OF FORMS OF CO-MANAGEMENT OR SELF-MANAGEMENT USED ELSEWHERE.

D. ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR: ANTUNES EMPHASIZED NEED FOR WELL-DEFINED RULES, BUT THAT THERE IS NO INCOMPATIBILITY BETWEEN COLLABORATION BY PRIVATE INITIATIVE AND COLLECTIVE "CONTROL" OF MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND TRADE. ONLY INCOMPATIBILITY IS WITH FORMS OF "NEOCAPITALISM." HE CLAIMED PORTUGUESE CAPITALISM HAS DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS FROM THE REST OF EUROPE.

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PAGE 03 LISBON 01140 282021Z

E. "AUTONOMOUS LINK": PORTUGAL IS WELL LOCATED TO BE FUNDAMENTAL STRATEGIC ELEMENT IN LINKS BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY "NEW ONES OF PORTUGUESE EXPRESSION." COUNTRY'S WHOLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY SHOULD PASS THROUGH A REDEFINITION OF ITS POSITION. IN ANTUNES' PERSONAL OPINION, NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE WILL COME THROUGH "PROGRESSIVE AUTONOMY ... RELATIVE TO THE SUPERPOWERS."

F. NEED FOR SACRIFICES: NEED FOR SACRIFICES WILL BE DIFFICULT

FOR PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND, ESPECIALLY AS IT GOES AGAINST MANY EXPECTATIONS WHICH SPRANG UP AFTER APRIL 25TH. PEOPLE WILL ONLY ACCEPT THEM IF THEY KNOW REQUESTED SACRIFICES WILL NOT END UP BENEFITTING "DOMINANT CLASSES." BUT UNLESS PEOPLE ACCEPT NECESSITY FOR SACRIFICES, ANTUNES UNDERLINED, "THERE IS NO PLAN WHICH COULD AVOID DISINTEGRATION OF PORTUGUESE ECONOMY AT THIS MOMENT." CHANGES IN CONSUMPTION PATTERNS WILL BE LINKED TO RESTRICTIONS ON SUPERFLUOUS GOODS.

G. "PLURALISM AND FREEDOM": IN TRANSITION TO NEW SOCIETY, EVERYTHING POSSIBLE WILL BE DONE TO MAINTAIN FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND PLURALISM. WITHOUT THEM TRANSFORMATION WOULD BE MORE COSTLY AND REQUIRE GREAT SACRIFICES IN HUMAN TERMS.

2. COMMENT: INTERVIEW SHOWS CONTINUATION OF PATTERN PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED IN PUBLIC UTTERANCES BY PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT FIGURES -- CALL FOR AUSTERITY AND SACRIFICES, PLANS FOR PRIVATE SECTOR WITH CONTINUED BUT DIMINISHED AND CONTROLLED ROLE, AND NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR COUNTRY BECAUSE OF DECOLONIZATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT REFORM, PRESS CONFERENCES, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, SOCIAL CHANGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON01140
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750071-0863
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975023/aaaaacmh.tel
Line Count: 134
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON 981
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; RELEASED <16 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; RELEASED <16 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <17 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MELO ANTUNES TV INTERVIEW ON ECONOMIC PROGRAM
TAGS: ECON, SOCI, PO, (ANTUNES, MELO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006